

107TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. CON. RES. 511

Congratulating the people and Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan on the eleventh anniversary of the independence of the Republic of Kazakhstan and praising longstanding and growing friendship between the United States and Kazakhstan.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OCTOBER 16, 2002

Mr. TOWNS submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on International Relations, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Congratulating the people and Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan on the eleventh anniversary of the independence of the Republic of Kazakhstan and praising longstanding and growing friendship between the United States and Kazakhstan.

Whereas on December 16, 2002, the people of the Republic of Kazakhstan will celebrate 11 years of independence and on December 25, 2002, the United States and Kazakhstan will mark the 11th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the two countries;

Whereas since the first days of its independence, Kazakhstan chose a course of construction of a stable and peaceful

state, voluntarily disarmed the world's fourth largest nuclear arsenal and joined the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START), and became an example of responsible national approach in the sphere of nonproliferation;

Whereas Kazakhstan, together with the United States within the framework of the Nunn-Lugar "Cooperative Threat Reduction" program aimed at complete elimination of nuclear infrastructure, successfully conducted Operation Sapphire on transferring 600 kg of highly enriched uranium from the territory of Kazakhstan;

Whereas in 1991 immediately after independence, Kazakhstan closed and sealed the world's second largest nuclear test site, after Nevada, in Semipalatinsk, which had been inherited from the former Soviet Union, where nuclear tests had been conducted for more than 40 years causing huge damage not only to the environment but to the population of Kazakhstan;

Whereas Kazakhstan in a short period of time has managed to overthrow totalitarian shackles and become a civil, dynamically developing society, in which public and private institutions are stronger, effective democratic mechanisms have been put in place, the rule of law is established, and basic human rights are respected;

Whereas due to the traditional tolerance of the people of Kazakhstan and the strong support of the Government of Kazakhstan, conflict and bloodshed common to that volatile region has not taken place in Kazakhstan where citizens of more than 100 ethnic groups enjoy equal rights and opportunities and peacefully coexist;

Whereas Kazakhstan is confidently moving toward integration with the world economic system by establishing all conditions for developing a civilized market economy;

Whereas the United States Government, recognizing the economic progress of Kazakhstan, granted to Kazakhstan “market economy status”, the first such designation of any country in the Commonwealth of Independent States;

Whereas the sustainable development of the banking and financial sector, advanced tax and pension systems, reforms in the municipal sector, and introduction of international bookkeeping standards in Kazakhstan allowed the United States to enter into an agreement with Kazakhstan (commonly referred to as the “Houston Initiative”) aimed at maintaining and developing relations between small and medium sized businesses in the two countries;

Whereas the application of chapter 1 of title IV of the Trade Act of 1974 (commonly referred to as the “Jackson-Vanik amendment”) to Kazakhstan prevents Kazakhstan from achieving permanent normal trade relations status with the United States;

Whereas United States businesses actively participating in the development of one of the world’s largest energy deposits in Kazakhstan consider Kazakhstan to be an alternative and reliable source of energy resources;

Whereas the Government of Kazakhstan has implemented President Nursultan Nazarbayev’s initiative to convene the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia—an efficient security mechanism for Asia that has been praised by the world community and

is a key factor in maintaining global and regional security;

Whereas since September 11, 2001, President Nazarbayev, on behalf of the people of Kazakhstan, has been providing unconditional and firm support in the ongoing allied campaign in Afghanistan by allowing coalition forces to use the air space of Kazakhstan and the largest airport in Almaty, Kazakhstan;

Whereas on the first anniversary of the September 11th tragedy, an unprecedented week-long campaign called “Children of Kazakhstan for the World without Terror” in support of the American people took place in Kazakhstan during which Kazakhstan school children wrote letters of support and solidarity to their American friends;

Whereas an independent and democratic Kazakhstan is the cornerstone of peace, stability, and prosperity in the vitally important region of Central Asia;

Whereas the increasing significance of Kazakhstan to United States foreign policy has resulted in the creation of the Silk Road Caucus in Congress designed to further involve the United States in the region, and in particular, with Kazakhstan; and

Whereas Kazakhstan is an important friend and strategic ally of the United States: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*
 2 *concurring), That Congress—*

3 (1) congratulates the people and Government of
 4 the Republic of Kazakhstan on the 11th anniversary
 5 of the independence of Kazakhstan and the estab-

1 lishment of diplomatic relations with the United
2 States;

3 (2) expresses gratitude for the support and as-
4 sistance of the people of Kazakhstan in the
5 antiterrorist campaign of the United States and coa-
6 lition of other countries;

7 (3) applauds the wise decision of Kazakhstan's
8 leadership to renounce the deployment of its inher-
9 ited nuclear weapons and to thus make the world a
10 safer place;

11 (4) calls upon the President to expand assist-
12 ance for environmental rehabilitation programs in
13 Semipalatinsk and the Aral Sea region;

14 (5) calls upon the Government of Kazakhstan
15 to further carry out democratic reforms;

16 (6) congratulates Kazakhstan for its achieve-
17 ments in economic development;

18 (7) welcomes the agreement with Kazakhstan
19 (commonly referred to as the "Houston Initiative")
20 aimed at maintaining and developing relations be-
21 tween small and medium sized businesses in the two
22 countries and believes in the importance of annual
23 increases in spending to support this initiative;

24 (8) recognizes the need to terminate the appli-
25 cation of chapter 1 of title IV of the Trade Act of

1 1974 (the “Jackson-Vanik amendment”) and pro-
2 vide permanent normal trade relations status to
3 Kazakhstan;

4 (9) praises President Nursultan Nazarbayev’s
5 initiative to convene the Conference on Interaction
6 and Confidence Building Measures in Asia, which
7 furtheres the role of Kazakhstan in ensuring regional
8 security;

9 (10) calls upon the President to expand pro-
10 grams of cultural and educational exchanges with
11 the Central Asian countries, particularly
12 Kazakhstan, in order to ensure better understanding
13 of American values by their peoples and to prevent
14 the appearance of anti-American sentiments in the
15 region; and

16 (11) urges further strengthening of strategically
17 important relations between Kazakhstan and the
18 United States on all other issues of importance be-
19 tween the two countries.

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